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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Friday, January 7, 1938

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "MIXED GRILL FOR COMPANY DINNER." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

Now that you're getting used to writing 1938 up in the corners of your letters maybe you'd like to try something else a little different. I hope you would because I'm all primed to tell you of a most satisfying meal I had a few days ago.

It was during the holidays when I went to a friend's house for dinner. I was looking forward to a good time visiting a congenial group of people. But I didn't look forward to another regulation holiday meal.

Fortunately I was wrong about the food. And thereby hangs this tale. Our hostess served us what is known in restaurant language as a "mixed grill." In my own words I call it an ideal dinner for a group of taste-weary guests.

The mixed grill that our hostess had that night was made up of several different kinds of broiled meat, a browned potato, and a grilled half tomato -- all served piping hot. With this she served a salad, a dessert, and coffee. There she had the whole meal -- simple, appetizing, and easy to prepare.

Besides having all these things to recommend it a mixed grill has variety. And it is possible for anyone to prepare it who has the facilities for cooking. It isn't necessary to have a special broiler under the oven to make a mixed grill. If you have one you can use it very well. But if you don't, you may broil your meat in a pan on top of the stove.

Our hostess that night used the broiler under her oven and pans on top of the stove both, because she had such a large group. Some women let the man of the house broil the meat over live coals in the fireplace while they prepare the rest of the meal.

What you put in a mixed grill depends on your own taste. It's just like any other kind of a meal. You must get foods that taste well, and look well together. When your meat is broiled it can't wait for a tardy potato to brown -- not and still be the juicy chop you want it to be.

There are many vegetables and fruits that go well on a mixed grill. White potatoes and sweetpotatoes cooked, then browned, are good. So are mushrooms. Or grilled halves of tomatoes such as our hostess had.

Pineapple is one of the favorite fruits to accompany meat patties or chops. Other favorites are halves of canned peaches or apricots. And banana and apple slices are fresh fruits you can use.

Of course when you are grilling the fruits and vegetables your problem is not to cook them done. Rather it is to heat them thoroughly so that they will be hot when you serve them.

The success of your grilled plate depends chiefly on your meat. You'll want small portions of two or three kinds on each plate. These may be tender cuts such as chops, tender steak, liver, veal, or lamb kidney. Or it may be ham and bacon.

If you don't want to invest in these more select cuts you may buy less tender cuts and have them ground up. Then make patties of them and broil them just the way you do tender cuts.

After you select your meat the important rule is "cook at a moderate temperature most of the time." Of course that's the rule in all meat cookery. But it's especially important in broiling because the old idea was that broiling consisted of cooking the meat at a hot temperature throughout.

Both experiments in meat cookery and the charred remains of many pieces of meat treated this way have convinced us that this is not the correct method. The temperature may be hot at first just long enough to sear the meat. This searing will brown the meat and develop the flavor in that way. But moderate heat the rest of the time will keep in the juices of the meat. You would lose this juice with a higher temperature.

Throughout the broiling turn the meat frequently. And baste it often with fat that has melted from it. When the meat is done to the stage you want it, take it off immediately and serve.

These rules hold true whether you broil by direct heat or in a pan on top of the stove. If you are broiling by direct heat, grease the rounds of the rack. If you're broiling in a pan, grease the pan lightly. In both cases have the temperature hot at first but reduce it to moderate as soon as your meat is browned. Turn the meat frequently. Baste it often. And take it off when it's done.

If you broil liver and other meats that contain little fat, cook at a moderate temperature throughout and baste these occasionally with melted butter or other fat.

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